

Message Text

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ACTION ITF-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 SS-15 SR-02 ORM-01 VO-03 SCA-01

AID-05 H-02 DODE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00 PRS-01 PA-02

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PM-03 SSO-00 NSCE-00 NSC-05

IO-10 EUR-12 /085 W

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O P 041340Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2465

INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA PRIORITY

CINCPAC REP GUAM PRIORITY

CINCPAC PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

UNCLAS SINGAPORE 1820

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF,VS SN

SUBJECT: VIETNAMESE REFUGEES

REF: STATE 100679

GOS OFFICIALS IN N Y 5 PRESS CONFERENCE ANNOUNCED THAT 25 SHIPS
CARRYING 3,710 VIETNAMESE REFUGEES HAD REACHED SINGAPORE ON WAY TO
GUAM AND SUBIC BAY, PHIL.

MINDEF PERM SEC TAY SIOW WAH AND COMMANDER OF SINGAPORE NAVY JAMES
AERIA CONDUCTED BRIEFING FOR LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL JOURNALISTS
LATE SUNDAY. THEY MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:

1. TWENTY-FIVE VESSELS HAVE ARRIVED AND POSSIBLY FIVE MORE ARE
HEADED FOR SINGAPORE. ALL VESSELS ARE CIVILIAN AND ALL ARE VIETNAMESE

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THEY RANGE IN SIZE FROM A TANKER CARRYING OVER 800 PERSONS TO

SMALL FISHING VESSELS.

2. THE VESSELS HAVE BEEN CORDONED OFF IN TWO AREAS. NINE ARE AT BEDOK, WHICH IS IN SINGAPORE WATERS, AND 16 ARE IN RHIO STRAITS, JUST OUTSIDE SINGAPORE'S TERRITORIAL WATERS. THE SINGAPORE NAVY MET THE VESSELS AT THAT POINT AND URGED THEM TO ANCHOR THERE. NO ONE IS PERMITTED TO LEAVE OR VISIT THE SHIPS.

3. THE VESSELS HAVE REQUESTED CHARTS, FUEL, FOOD AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES FOR THEIR VOYAGE TO SUBIC BAY, PI, AND GUAM AND HAVE OFFERED TO PAY FOR THE SUPPLIES. THE SINGAPORE OFFICIALS SAID THE RESUPPLY OPERATION SHOULD BE COMPLETED BY MORNING OF MAY 6 AND THAT SOME SHIPS COULD DEPART THAT AFTERNOON.

ASKED IF ALL VESSELS WERE SEA WORTHY ENOUGH TO MAKE IT TO THE PHILIPPINES AND GUAM, THE SPOKESMAN SAID THEY SHOULD BE ABLE TO SINCE THEY MADE IT FROM SAIGON TO SINGAPORE.

4. THE GOS OFFICIAL SAID EACH VESSEL HAD ITS OWN SPOKESMAN AND THEY HAD ASKED SINGAPORE TO TRANSMIT FOR THEM TO THE AMERICAN EMBASSY AND PRIME MINISTERS OF CANADA AND AUSTRALIA LETTERS OF APPEAL REQUESTING PERMISSION TO IMMIGRATE. THE LETTERS, THE SPOKESMAN SAID, WILL BE DELIVERED MONDAY, MAY 6, TO THE APPROPRIATE EMBASSIES IN SINGAPORE. THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT NONE OF THE VIETNAMESE HAVE ASKED FOR REFUGE IN SINGAPORE. VIETNAMESE ON ONE OF THE SMALL VESSELS INDICATED THEIR WISH TO GO TO FRANCE.

5. THE NAVY SPOKESMAN SAID THEY SAW NO MILITARY PERSONNEL ABOARD THE VESSELS, BUT THEY SUSPECT THAT THERE ARE SMALL ARMS ABOARD SOME SHIPS.

6. USIS EMPLOYEE/VOA CORRESPONDENT ROSARIO ATTENDED BRIEFING AND REPORTED ABOVE INFORMATION. EMBASSY EXPECTS TO HAVE FURTHER INFORMATION MAY 5.

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